

Claims

1. An apparatus for displaying at least two modes comprising an interactive application mode and a television program mode on a display device, the apparatus
5 comprising:

a television program signal receiver;

an interactive application signal receiver;

means for switching between said television program mode and said interactive application mode being active in said display device;

10 means to receive remote control signals from a remote control device having a mute key for generating a mute signal;

means to enable a mute-to-interactive application feature; and

wherein when said mute-to-interactive application feature is enabled and said television program mode is active in said display device, upon receipt of said mute signal, said
15 mode switching means is activated causing said interactive application mode to be active in said display device.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein when said mute-to-interactive application feature is enabled and said interactive application mode is active in said display device, upon receipt of said mute signal, said mode switching means is activated causing said television program
20 mode to be active in said display device.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:

means to switch channels when said television program mode is active in said display device;

means to store a last viewed item as a go-back channel in a memory source;

25 said remote control device having a go-back channel key for generating a go-back channel signal;

wherein when said television program mode is active and said last viewed item is said interactive application mode, upon receipt of said go-back channel signal, said mode switching means is activated causing said interactive application mode to be active in said
30 display device.

4. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein when said interactive application mode is active and said last viewed item is a first channel of said television program mode, upon receipt of said go-back channel signal, said mode switching means is activated causing said television program mode to be active and said first channel to be displayed in said display device.

5 5. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein when in television program mode and said last viewed item is a first channel, upon receipt of said go-back channel signal, said channel switching means is activated causing said first channel to be displayed in said display device.

6. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:

means to enable a commercial skip feature in response to a commercial skip signal;

10 said remote control device having a commercial skip key for generating a commercial skip signal;

wherein when said commercial skip feature is enabled and said television program mode is active, upon detecting a beginning of a commercial break, said mode switching means is activated causing said interactive application mode to be active until either detection
15 of an end of a commercial break or upon elapse of a selected period of time.

7. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said commercial skip feature is enabled, said apparatus is adapted to detect said beginning and said end of said commercial break.

8. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said interactive application mode is a browser mode.

20 9. The apparatus of claim 8 further comprising:

means to enable a television during download function;

wherein when said browser mode is active and said television during download function is enabled, upon a download above a threshold time being detected, said mode switching means is activated causing said television program mode to be active until detection
25 of completion of said download.

10. A method of switching between at least two modes comprising an interactive application mode and a television program mode, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a television program signal;

receiving an interactive application signal;

30 displaying one of said television program signal or said interactive application signal in a display device;

upon receipt of a mute-to-interactive application enabling command, enabling a mute-to-interactive application feature; and

wherein when said mute-to-interactive application feature is enabled and said television program signal is being displayed in said display device, upon receipt of a mute signal from a remote control device, activating a mode switching mean causing said interactive application signal to be displayed in said display device.

5 11. The method of claim 10 wherein when said mute-to-interactive application feature is enabled and said interactive application signal is being displayed in said display device, upon receipt of said mute signal, activating said mode switching means causing said television program signal to be displayed in said display device.

10 12. The method of claim 10 further comprising:
tuning a channel of said television program signal for display in said display device;
storing a last viewed item as a go-back channel in a memory source in response to a channel change or a mode switch; and

15 wherein when said television program signal is being displayed and said last viewed item is said interactive application signal, upon receipt of a go-back channel signal from said remote control device, activating said mode switching means causing said interactive application signal to be displayed in said display device.

20 13. The method of claim 12 wherein when said interactive application mode is being displayed and said last viewed item is a first channel, upon receipt of said go-back channel signal from said remote control device, activating said mode switching means causing said television program mode to be active and said first channel to be tuned and displayed in said display device.

25 14. The method of claim 12 wherein when a second channel of said television program signal is tuned and displayed and said last viewed item is a first channel, upon receipt of said go-back channel signal from said remote control device, activating a channel switching means causing said first channel to be tuned and displayed in said display device.

15. The method of claim 10 further comprising:
upon receipt of a commercial skip enabling signal from said remote control device, enabling a commercial skip feature; and

30 wherein when said commercial skip feature is enabled and said television program signal is being displayed, upon detecting a beginning of a commercial break, activating said mode switching means causing said interactive application signal to be displayed until either detection of an end of a commercial break or upon elapse of a selected period of time.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein said commercial skip feature is adapted to detect said beginning and said end of said commercial break.

17. The method of claim 10 wherein said interactive application mode is a browser mode and said interactive application signal is a browser signal.

5 18. The method of claim 17 further comprising:

upon receipt of television-during-download enabling signal from said remote control device, enabling a television-during-download function; and

wherein when said browser signal is being displayed and said television-during-download function is enabled, upon a download above a threshold time being detected,
10 activating said mode switching means causing said television program signal to be displayed until detection of completion of said download.

19. An apparatus for displaying at least two modes comprising an interactive application mode and a television program mode on a display device, the apparatus comprising:

15 a television program signal receiver;

an interactive application signal receiver;

means for switching between said television program mode and said television program mode being active in said display device;

20 means to receive remote control signals from a remote control device having a go-back key for generating a go-back signal; and

wherein when said display device was in the interactive application mode, upon receipt of said go-back signal, said mode switching means is activated causing said interactive application mode to be active in said display device.

20. The apparatus of claim 19 wherein said interactive application mode is a browser
25 mode.

21. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said remote control signals include a television-during-download signal generated by the remote control device; when said display device is in the browser mode, a download is initiated, and the download has not been completed, said mode switching means is activated causing said television program mode to
30 be active in said display device; and when said download has been completed, said mode switching means is activated causing said browser mode to be active in said display device.